

THE RIO NEWS

PUBLISHED TRIMONTHLY

on the eve of departure of the American packet, the French packet of the 15th, and Royal Mail packet of the 24th of the month.

Contains a summary of news and a review of Brazilian affairs, a list of the arrivals and departures of foreign vessels, the commercial report and price current of the market, a table of freights and charters, and all other information necessary to a correct judgment on Rio Janeiro trade.

(Each invariably in advance)

Subscriptions sent out with the calendar year	20\$000
do for six months do	10\$000
do for one year in the United States do	20\$000
do for six months do	10\$000
do for one year in Great Britain do	25\$000
do for six months do	12\$500
do for one year in the United States do	20\$000
do for six months do	10\$000

All subscriptions must run with the calendar year. Back numbers supplied at this office from April 1st 1879. Subscriptions and advertisements received at the

EDITORIAL ROOMS:—8 Rua São Pedro.

Agents for the United States:

C. Mc CULLOCH BECHER & Co.
45 Wall Street, New York

RIO DE JANEIRO, JUNE 5TH 1880.

The Rio Grande Commercial Association met on the 15th ult., for the purpose of receiving the report of a committee charged with drawing up a protest against the new additional tax of 1 1/2 percent on foreign goods reshipped from one Brazilian port to another. After calling attention to the injustice of levying this tax on the shipment of goods from Rio Grande to Pelotas and Porto Alegre, which the committee designate as only different anchorages of the same port, the report pronounces the tax abusive, out of place, vexatious and illegal. The committee asserts that the term *cabotagem* can only and does only refer to the maritime commerce between the ports of different provinces, and that the tax can not therefore be justly imposed upon the trade between the ports of the same province. In respect to the trade between the three cities named, the committee declares it to be interior and fluvial and not subject to the provisions of the law. Finally, after pointing out the waste of time and annoyances arising through the enforcement of the *imposto expediente*, the committee urges the immediate memorializing of the imperial government for the repeal or annulment of the same with reference to the port of Rio Grande do Sul. The report was at once adopted and the committee was instructed to draw up the memorial. We believe the merchants of Santos have also presented a similar memorial against this unwise and unjust tax, which in the latter case does not refer to the imposition of the tax upon goods in transit between ports of the same province. In this last case the tax is imposed upon foreign goods reshipped to the city of São Paulo by way of Santos and does not tax them when shipped overland by way of the Dom Pedro II railway. A tax which is capable of such discriminations and vexations can neither be just nor politic, and its repeal should not be delayed one moment.

The municipal authorities New Orleans, Natchez, Vicksburg and, for that matter, all the cities and towns along the line of the Mississippi, up to Memphis, are enlarging the powers of their several boards of health, with a view to the avoidance of pestilence on the return of warm weather. Street-cleaning, improved sewage, and the summary suppression of nuisances are the order of the day. The most hopeful feature of the case is that the merchants and business men, especially of New Orleans and Memphis, are moving in the matter themselves and not leaving it to local sanitarians, who have heretofore pocketed the money and, as has often been the case even in our own city, left the work unperformed.

We take pleasure in calling the attention of the board of health to the above excerpt with a hope that something will be found in it worthy of emulation. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," says a good old maxim, and no one should have a better appreciation of that fact than municipal health boards. No one has yet begun to predict the calamities of the next hot season, but the possibilities of an epidemic are always with us. In view of the unexpected results of Inspector-general Commandador Jardim's engineering we may or we may not have an abundance of water, and the street mains may or may not be laid. At all events, a wise policy demands that the health authorities shall at once begin to take precautions against the possible return of yellow fever. They should see to it that all the necessary street work, in the laying of water pipes and paving, should be done during the cool season, that all those filthy alleys, back streets, cortijos, etc., should be thoroughly cleaned and kept in order, that all those pestiferous cow stables should be removed from the densely-inhabited parts of the city, and that there should be a strict

observance of sanitary requirements in the construction of buildings. We would suggest also, as we have done again and again, that there should be some prohibition placed upon those disgraceful, intolerable street nuisances, which no self-respecting people can or would tolerate.

The minister of finance has nominated a commission of six treasury and customs officials to revise the new tariff. The public will scarcely receive this item of news with gratification, as tariff revisions in Brazil have become synonymous with tariff elevations. The fair promises made by the late minister of finance, in providing for the last revision, were accepted by many merchants as a guarantee that their interests would receive due consideration. The invitation extended to them to assist in the work of revision was accepted as a proof of the minister's good intentions. The result of this revision is well known, and it will be some time before the merchants of this city will forget the deception practiced upon them. After all the time they spent in discussing the subject, and in preparing a simpler and juster scale of duties, they found themselves shut out from participation in the final revision and denied all knowledge of the completed work until its publication, although they were given to understand that it would not be put into force before being submitted to them. They then discovered that wherever they recommended a higher rate, the recommendation was accepted, but wherever they pointed out the necessity of reducing the rate the recommendation was discarded. In the matter of classification, too, their proposed changes were in very many cases ignored, and many of the vexatious regulations of which they had so often complained were either retained or changed for the worse. That tariff went into force on the 1st of January last, and in the short space of five months the government itself has reached the conclusion that something is wrong. It is needless to urge, perhaps, that the merchants reached this same conclusion even before the new tariff went into force, and the course of trade since has verified that conclusion over and over again. When a tariff brings the merchant into immediate and continuous conflict with the customs authorities, something is wrong; when the tariff decreases the importation and sale of certain lines of goods, something is clearly wrong; when a tariff increases the cost of living to the working classes and therefore decreases their ability to obtain the necessities and little comforts of a frugal life, something is gravely wrong; when a tariff increases the difficulties of collection, increases the burdens of taxation, increases the complaints of the people, and at the same time decreases the public revenue, something is radically and seriously wrong. All this the new tariff has done, and it is full time that it should be changed. In view of the fact that the custom house receipts for the month just closed are 837,426 below the receipts of May, 1879, and the receipts for the five months ending May 31, are 41,102 below the receipts of the corresponding period of 1879, it is clearly evident that the government is not gaining by the new tariff. Giving all due allowance for the decreased receipts from coffee exports during the past month, the customs income still presents a highly unfavorable appearance as the receipts from the increased importation of goods in anticipation of the new tariff—including the goods which were entered for dispatch before January 1st upon which duties are still being paid, and the large quantity of goods which arrived just too late for dispatch under the old tariff—will more than offset any apparent balance in favor of the present year. This falling off in the revenue and the late criticism on the legality of the new tariff are undoubtedly the causes which have led to this projected revision. Could the treasury and customs authorities be convinced that they have now exceeded the revenue limit of taxation, and that a decrease in the tariff is the only way to secure an increased revenue, we should hail this appointment of a commission with gladness. The official traditions, however, are all opposed to such a course, and the mercantile community will probably await the issue with resignation.

During the past four years the New York department of public works has added to the Croton water service 70 miles of distributing pipes, making the present extent of pipes 480 miles. The Croton aqueduct supplies 95,000,000 gallons a day. The elevated railroads consume over half a million gallons daily.

RAIN-FALL AT MORRO VELHO.

The last number of the *Revista de Engenharia* contains an interesting article by our friend Prof. Orville A. Derby, on the rain-fall at Morro Velho, province of Minas Geraes, based on the records kept by the São João d'El Rey Gold Mining Co. These were kindly furnished by the superintendent, Mr. Pearson Morrison, to Prof. Derby in his recent trip through that province.

In a country in which statistical information of all kinds is so difficult to obtain even when it exists, no better proofs of the enlightened management that characterizes that company and has made it so great a success can be produced than the fact that it has carefully recorded and tabulated the rain-fall of the place during twenty-five years and has freely placed the record at the service of the public.

The article being too extensive to quote entire we make the following extracts from it referring for fuller information to the table in the *Revista*.

Morro Velho is situated in the valley of the Rio das Velhas some thirteen Brazilian leagues from the source near Ouro Preto and about two leagues from the city of Sabará, the head of navigation on that river. It is close to the western margin of the high mountainous plateau of Minas which forms a part of the great mountain system of which Von Eschwege gave the name of Serra do Espinhaço and is at an elevation of about 700 metres above the level of the sea, the mountains in the vicinity rising from 300 to 1,000 metres above the valley in this place. The climate is therefore that of the high mountainous lands and although the rain-fall is probably lower than in the eastern portion of the mountainous belt it is higher than in the lower plains to the westward which characterize the greater portion of the valley of the Rio das Velhas and the upper portion of the valley of the São Francisco.

The annual mean of the rain-fall for the 25 years (1855-1879) is 1,637 mm., being higher than that of Rio de Janeiro (1,120 mm.) and of Ceará (1,437 mm.), the only points of the empire in which records have been kept for a sufficiently long time to permit a comparison. The range is from 1,154 mm. in 1873 to 2,250 mm. in 1858. The rain-fall is very unequally distributed throughout the year there being a well marked wet, and dry season each of six months duration—the former extending from October to March, the latter from April to September. The mean for the wet season is 1,457 mm., or 58% of the whole, that for the dry season being 180 mm., or 11%. The wettest month is December (330 mm.) the driest, July (11 mm.). The wet season maximum is 2,202 mm. in 1857-58, the minimum 985 mm. in 1872-73. The dry season maximum is 346 mm. in 1857-58, the minimum 71 mm. in 1878. The greatest rain-fall in any one month was 762 mm. in December 1856. The least occurs in the months of June, July and August, the mean of which is 39 mm. for the three months, there having been twelve years with absolutely no rain (or less than 5 mm.) during all three. In 1869 only 2 mm. fell between the end of May and the beginning of October, a period of four months.

With the exception of the annual drouth of the dry season the region has not suffered during these 25 years any severe drouths, the minimum annual rainfall (985 mm.) which being distributed through six months of the year is sufficient for ordinary agricultural purposes. During the three years 1877-79 in which a great portion of northern Brazil suffered so severely, the rain-fall at Morro Velho was above the average in the season of 1876-77, considerably below in that of 1877-78 (1,071 mm.), and but slightly below in that of 1878-79. The table presents no evidence of periodicity corresponding to the eleven years' periods discovered by Hauser in the rain-fall of southern India, and in that respect differs from the tables of Rio de Janeiro and Ceará which show some evidence of such periodicity.

THE ATMOSPHERE AND YELLOW FEVER.

During the yellow fever epidemic of 1879, Mr. William Van Slooten, C. E., of New Orleans, made chemical analyses of the air from September 9 to November 24, and found, according to Dr. Clendinning, of Fort Lee, N. J., a series of extraordinary variations in the amount of free and albuminoid ammonia to the million of cubic feet of atmosphere. These corresponded very curiously with the progress and fluctuations of the epidemic. For instance, on September 9 the analysis showed 125.62 grains of free and 350.56 grains of albuminoid ammonia to each 1,000,000 of cubic feet of air. On September 19 the amount of albuminoid ammonia stood at the extraordinary figure of 400.75 grains. This was its highest point, and, with many fluctuations from day to day, it gradually declined as the epidemic wore out its fury, until on November 22 the amount was only 47.75 grains. The curve of the free ammonia was less regular, but the decline had a general correspondence with that of albuminoid, until on November 24 the amount had fallen to 23.31 grains. The amount of ozone showed a similar variation from half a grain per 100 cubic feet of air on September 18, to seven grains on October 22, from which it appeared that the increase of ozone was accompanied by a constant decrease of ammoniacal products. The fluctuation of both from day to day and week to week, as the wave of the epidemic rose and fell, was very striking.—*Scientific American*.

The two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the settlement of Boston, U. S., will be celebrated on the 17th of September next.

This number of immigrants arriving at the port of New York in March was 21,658, and during the quarter ending March 31, 35,825.

LEGISLATIVE NOTES

—Now that the two chambers have finally settled into the harness, the sessions have been interrupted and more business has been accomplished, though the great bulk of it is of a private or routine character. In the Senate much work of a political character has been transacted through the medium of the reply to the speech from the throne, which entered into discussion on the 24th ult. As this subject generally gives occasion for endless discussions on all sorts of political questions, it is likely to continue for some time yet. In addition to this the Senate has spent some time in discussing a bill on the legitimacy of spurious children. On the 4th inst. the Visconde de Pelotas and Counselor Gaspar Silveira Martins were admitted as senators from Rio Grande do Sul without discussion.

—On the 24th Senator Teixeira Jr. addressed an interpellation to the government on the disturbances in Campos and in various parts of the empire. He called attention to the general lack of personal security and the frequent breaches of law and good order. In reply the minister of justice said that the government would not fail to withdraw its confidence from all police delegates who proved themselves unworthy of it. The Visconde do Rio Branco also alluded to the question on the 25th. On the 1st inst. the minister of justice presented a bill in the interests of this subject. It provides for a special chief of police, having extraordinary powers, for the upper Rio S. Francisco, who shall have a special force of 100 men to preserve order.

—In discussing the reply to the speech from the throne on the 24th, Senator Silveira da Motta referred to the imperial announcement that public tranquillity remains undisturbed and then called up the disturbances of January 1st. He condemned the course of the late ministry in the severest terms. On the 25th, the Visconde do Rio Branco also condemned the acts of the Simbini ministry with relation to the *minion* riots, and contested the legality of its course in its revision of the tariff. He argued that the commission had no right to impose duties on free goods, nor to elevate the rates on articles not mentioned in the laws of Oct. 20, 1877, and Oct. 31, 1879.

—In the Chamber the work has been much more varied. One of the chief topics has been the discussion of Rio Grande affairs. As this is simply a political quarrel between two branches of the liberal party in that province, it has no special interest. It serves as a pretext for Deputy Fernando Osorio to go into opposition. Mr. Morris N. Kolb's project for erecting a hotel in the Passeio Publico came before the Chamber on the 24th, and was at once killed by a few timely words from Deputy Joaquim Nabuco in favor of the retention of the Passeio as a public garden. The special committee on the Saraiva project for electoral reform made its report on the 25th, a few slight modifications having been made in it. It entered into discussion on the 2nd inst. Deputy Carlos Alfonso returned to the defense of his brother, Ex-Minister Alfonso Celso, on the 25th, in the reissue of redeemed currency, and of the late ministry in the matter of re-affirming the duration of the Botanical Garden tramway privilege. On the same date Deputy Fernando Osorio made an effective *exposé* of the present ruinous state of the Brazilian navy, and urged the acquisition of new vessels, not by purchase in Europe, but by building them in Brazilian shipyards.

—The accident to the Pedregulho reservoir was brought before the Senate on the 26th and 31st by Senator Corrêa, and before the Chamber on the 28th by Deputy Freitas Coutinho. On the 1st inst. Deputy Moraes Jardim, inspector of public works, replied to the interpellations in the Chamber. He asserted that the injury is not at all serious, and that he had not "the least hesitation in assuming the fullest responsibility not only for that construction, but for all the works executed under his direction." He would guarantee that when the infiltration of water through the fissures was checked, for which he had taken provision, no other measures would be necessary and the reservoir would last eternally.

LOCAL NOTES

—The American packet *City of Paris* arrived at noon yesterday, after an unusually long voyage.

—Major Samuel A. Porter, retired list, U. S. A. well known to many Americans of this city, died in Boston, April 21st.

—We are pleased to note that one of the features of the Camões celebration is to be a regatta on the 13th inst. on the bay of Botafogo. This is recognizing an element in education only too neglected in Brazil. Even the foreign residents of the city, like the Brazilians, are too apt to plead the climate as an excuse for every phase of exercise tending to develop physical manhood. Boating has almost classical authority for its practice, and in Europe many leading men of every line have been rowers of boats in friendly contests. A few disdain this phase of physical education as opposed to high mental development, yet Thomas Hughes, at Oxford, was no lower in the class lists for being a cricketer and boatman; George Denham, now on the bench, was not prevented from attaining the honors of the classical tripos by twice rowing in the Cambridge crew; Waddington, the eminent French statesman, rowed in the winning crew while at Cambridge; and many others might be named who excelled in sports and achieved high places in the state. With the finest bay in the world, the youth of this should make boating a means of developing their frames, thus fortifying themselves against the insidious approaches of the fevers which carry off scores yearly simply because their ill-developed bodies offer no resistance to the slightest attacks. That this sport is beginning to be received with favor is shown by the fact that for the first time in Brazil one of the prominent colleges will be represented on the course—two of the boats entered being manned by the students of the Escola Militar. The re-appearance of the Guanabara Club in the lists is an evidence of continued vitality which will be gratifying to its friends.

—On the 24th ult., 336 immigrants were sent up to the barracks at Barra do Pirahy.

—The quarantine at Buenos Ayres on vessels arriving from this port has been reduced to three days.

—Decrees 7,719 and 7,721, of the 15th ult., granted concessions for coffee machinery to José Luis Gompertz Neves.

—The late elections in Minas Geraes have confirmed the promotion of Deputy Lima Duarte to a seat in the ministry.

—The public debt of the city of Rio de Janeiro, according to a report to the minister of empire of the 21st ult., is 2,171,073\$779.

—The Camões celebration begins on the 10th inst. Every one will celebrate, even the United Blacksmiths and Cripplers' Union.

—At the instance of Alderman Nobre the city council has voted an annual premium of 3,000\$ for the education of two young ladies who shall dedicate themselves to some learned profession and pursue a course of study necessary to its attainment.

—Antonio José dos Santos was captured, on the 27th ult., in the act of robbing two trunks at No. 25, Rua do Regente. Six months hence, Antonio will appear before a jury where he will deny all knowledge of the charge, and will be discharged accordingly.

—Has anyone heard anything about the confiscation of the São Cristóvão tramway? According to the annual report that line carries more passengers than the Botafogo Garden line, and as it expends little money in keeping its track, rolling stock and animals in good order, its gains must be very large. Besides that it does not carry so many grateful government officials on free passes, under government requisition, hence its large traffic means larger dividends. Truly this line would be a mine of wealth to the other aldermen.

—Alderman J. Ferreira Nobre presented a protest in the municipal council on the 22nd ult., against the extension of the time of the Botafogo Garden street railway privilege, in which he proposed that the city authorities should respect the rights of that company no longer than 1886. Even this moderate concession on the part of the council is more than the reputation of that body warrants us in expecting. There has been no extension of time, as Alderman Nobre well knows; and there is no agreement by which this property will revert to the city. It will therefore be in perfect order for the illustrious *pater conscriptus* to move for the immediate confiscation of the company's property.

—An enthusiastic demonstration in honor of the popular Rio Grande statesman, Senator-elect Gaspar Silveira Martins, took place on the evening of the 27th ult. A great crowd of his friends and admirers assembled at his residence in Rua de Olinda, Botafogo, where many speeches were made congratulating him on his recovery from his late illness and on his return to an active participation in the legislative affairs of the nation. The illustrious orator of the advanced Brazilian liberals replied briefly to the addresses, after which he received the personal congratulations of his friends. The prophecy of Silveira Martins, on leaving the Simbini cabinet, that he should fall on his feet, has been more than realized.

—Senator Janguelha has "some doubts" about the "pretended rights" of the Botafogo Garden line in "its statutes of 1862," because "it petitions so many times for the recognition of the term marked in them." Now if the illustrious Thomas will just look back a little and see how easy it has been for ministers to violate the terms of this contract, even to the granting of the Copacabana concession in open violation of the company's contract, his doubts will all be removed. The company has grown rich, and its cash box has become a powerful temptation to the hungry and unscrupulous politician. It is quite natural, therefore, that the company should seek to protect itself by an official assurance from every minister. The time when senators, and deputies, and aldermen can be fully and implicitly trusted in such matters, will put an end to all further anxiety.

—The new iron steamship *Columbia*, Capt. Frederick Bolles, of the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company, en route for San Francisco, entered this port for coal on the morning of the 29th ult. She left New York on the 9th ult., and made the trip to this port in 19½ days, running at medium speed. The *Columbia* was built by Messrs. John Roach & Son for the San Francisco and Portland, Oregon, service and is unquestionably one of the finest specimens of marine architecture afloat. Her dimensions are 334 feet over all, 38½ feet beam and 23 feet in depth of hold. She has an indicated horse power of 2,300, a register of about 3,000 tons and superior accommodations for 200 first class passengers. She is furnished with 200 Edison electric lights—the first steamer fitted up with them—which have thus far worked in the most satisfactory manner. Every stateroom, the cabins, officers' rooms and all the passages are provided with these lights, the electricity for which is furnished by four Edison dynamo machines in the engine room. Each light has a lock-wind and under the control of the steward. The powerful electric light is of 1600-candle power and is run by a Weston electric machine. The different parts of the steamer are connected by telephones and electric bells. The vessel is also provided with the Holly water system from which all parts are constantly provided with water and at a pressure sufficient for use in case of fire. The inside finish is of hard woods and is noteworthy for its substantial and elegant character. In all respects, the *Columbia* is one of the most complete and well-built ocean steamers that we have ever seen. She carries a full cargo of locomotives, cars, and railway supplies for Portland, and left this port for San Francisco on the morning of the 31st. We are indebted to Captain Bolles and Chief-engineer Henderson, who supervised her construction, for late papers and many courtesies.

